

“Wickhamford Elementary School”

A proposal in the 1910s

In the period 1913-1915 there was a proposal to open a school for Wickhamford children, as Badsey School was becoming overcrowded. In the event, nothing became of this suggestion, probably due to the intervention of the Great War.

Overcrowding at Badsey School

A return for the pupil numbers at Badsey Council School in 1913 showed that there were 297 children on the register. At this time there were approximately two hundred older children in the Mixed Department and one hundred in the Infant Department. Of these, forty-five came from Wickhamford and the remainder, apart from two from Bengeworth, came from Badsey and Aldington. The residents of Wickhamford were keen to have a school of their own, a suggestion which the Managers of Badsey School thought worthy of consideration in view of their overcrowding problem.

Wickhamford Elementary School proposal

The Local Education Authority held an Enquiry at Badsey School in December 1913 and a decision was made to build a school at Wickhamford. Nothing happened immediately but, in 1914, His Majesty's Inspector, Mr Cartwright, brought the matter to the attention of the Board of Education. The Chief Education Officer for Worcestershire, Mr Priestly, was asked to submit a return to the Board of Education. This gave the Board cause for concern as it highlighted the severe overcrowding at Badsey School.

In March 1915, the LEA issued a Public Notice stating their intention to provide a new Public Elementary School in the parish of Wickhamford (see below). However, the war-time restrictions must have prevented the scheme from progressing any further. Four months later, the Director of Education visited Badsey to discuss the issue of accommodation but there was no mention of the Wickhamford School proposal. Also, because of the restrictions in place, no alterations could be made to Badsey School either. As a temporary measure, no children were promoted from the Infant Department at the end of the year.

The Badsey School Committee

The Badsey School committee members 1913-1915 period were Julius Sladden, Charles Binyon, Walter Blake and William Mustoe from Badsey, George Agg from Wickhamford and Wilson Henry Butler from Aldington.

At the committee meeting of 5th March 1915 those present were Messrs Blake, Mustoe, Agg and Butler. Regarding the proposal for a new school, a letter was read from the authority enclosing copy of Public Notice which had been issued by them under the provisions of Section 8(i) of the Education Act 1902, as to their intention to provide a new Public Elementary School for not more than 100 children in the Parish

of Wickhamford. The Authority wanted to know what, if any, works or repair would be required.

The managers did not make any suggestion or recommendation. After this the proposal was dropped.

Where would the new school have been located ?

No information remains as to where Wickhamford School would have been built in the village. In all probability it would have been located along Manor Road. At that time the most likely position would have been in the field between the nursery built by Hubert Richards in 1906/07 and then sold to William Pearce during the War – the area of the present Penelope Gardens – and the Sandys Arms. At that time the field there was called Sally Close.

What if.....

If a decision had been taken by the LEA in March 1915 to build a school in Wickhamford it is probable that land purchase and building could have been completed ready for opening in September 1916.

By looking at the Badsey School registers for this period it is possible to construct a list of Wickhamford children who would have attended a school in the village. The following table lists those children born between 1900 and 1912 who might have attended a school in Wickhamford. In addition there were about a ten children from Bowers Hill on the way to Willersey from Badsey, who could have made a shorter journey to a school in Manor Road *via* the bridal path from Francis Grave into Wickhamford.

The number of Wickhamford children attending Basdey School in 1913 was given as 45, but the list below comes to about 60. This must be considered as a potential maximum and the actual number would fall somewhere between these figures.

Surname	First names	Date of birth	Parent
AGG	Edith	27 Feb 1903	George Agg
AGG	Albert	29 Oct 1907	George Agg
BAKER	Evelyn	24 Oct 1911	Mrs Hartwell
BAYLISS	Frederick	27 Oct 1904	Frederick Bayliss
BAYLISS	Edward Leonard	21 Mar 1907	Frederick Bayliss
BENNETT	Ivy	27 May 1907	William Bennett
BENNETT	Lilian	10 Oct 1905	William Bennett
BROTHERTON	Beatrice Florence May	27 May 1909	George Brotherton
BUTCHER	Lilian	14 Sep 1909	E M Butcher
BUTCHER	Nancy	14 Sep 1909	E M Butcher
BUTCHER	Edward George	06 Dec 1911	L A Butcher
CARR	Elsie Elizabeth	08 Apr 1904	Charles E Carr
CHAMBERLAIN	Marjorie Annie	26 Oct 1900	Frank Chamberlain
COLLEY	Phyllis	03 Sep 1904	Jesse Colley
COX	Ruth Mary	21 Dec 1905	William Cox
COX	Ernest Harold	16 Aug 1904	William Cox
EDEN	Gladys May	19 Sep 1904	George Eden

GRIFFIN	Sidney	07 Dec 1905	Basil Griffin
HACKLETT	Edgar John	30 Oct 1906	Mrs W Hartwell
HAINES	Hilda Doris	05 Nov 1910	Norris Haines
HALFORD	Charles Samuel	12 Feb 1907	Charles Halford
HALFORD	Melva Rose	26 Oct 1909	Hilda Halford
HALFORD	Alfred John	27 Jan 1906	Charles (?) Halford (or Frederick ?)
HALFORD	Violet Phyllis	31 Oct 1911	Allen Ernest Halford
HARDIMAN	Doris May	19 Jul 1906	George Hardiman
HEMMING	Kathleen	12 Feb 1903	William Hemming
JAMES	Lilian Elsie Doris	12 Jan 1904	Not given in Register
JONES	Percival	02 Apr 1907	William Jones
JONES	Dorothy May	19 Jan 1911	William Jones
JONES	Phyllis	11 Jul 1904	Herbert George Jones
LAWLEY	Vera Winifred	30 Apr 1903	F Lawley
MALIN	Thomas	27 Apr 1903	John Malin
MASON	Frederick Charles	05 May 1910	Charles Mason
MOISEY	Theodore George	15 Sep 1911	James Moisey
NEW	Hilda	04 Jul 1910	Walter New
NEWBURY	Jesse Harris Collett	26 Jul 1907	John Newbury
NEWITT	Elsie May	26 Sep 1903	Thomas Newitt
NEWITT	Algernon Edward	28 May 1902	Thomas Newitt
NEWMAN	Charles Frederick	04 Jun 1908	Frederick Newman
PETHARD	Nancie	08 Jul 1903	Edward Pethard
PITMAN	Sidney Samuel	27 Aug 1903	James Pitman
PITMAN	Reginald	24 Oct 1911	James Pitman
ROBBINS	Kate	22 Jun 1909	George Robbins
ROTHERHAM	Lilian	15 Feb 1906	Albert Rotherham
SMITH	Joseph Richard	13 Aug 1905	William Smith
SMITH	Lillie	06 Apr 1903	William Smith
SMITH	Dorothy	10 Sep 1910	William Smith
SMITH	William	13 Jun 1904	William Smith
STYLES	John Stephen	12 Sep 1910	Stephen Styles
SUTTON	George Lewis	13 Aug 1908	George Sutton
SUTTON	Annie Eliza	05 Aug 1906	George Sutton
TURNER	Gladys May	23 Sep 1911	Robert Turner
TURNER	Clara	08 Jun 1907	Robert Turner
TURNER	Edgar	30 Sep 1909	Robert Turner
WESTWOOD	Hilda	01 Nov 1902	John Westwood
WESTWOOD	Florence Margaret	31 Dec 1904	John Westwood
WILLIAMS	Gwendoline	2 July 1911	Louis Williams

Tom Locke December 2015